



PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

16-19 April 2018



Gabi Zimmer - GUE/NGL President - Situation in Syria

Donald Trump's deplorable Twitter diplomacy has brought the world to the brink of a direct conflict between nuclear powers. This danger is real. Any plans by France and the UK to enter into a military conflict with the Syrian government must be abandoned immediately. The use of chemical weapons is a crime against humanity but military strikes are not the solution; the Chemical Weapons Convention and other instruments of international law are. Macron and May could push for a diplomatic solution by convening a summit with Trump and Putin in order to prevent an escalation. We urge the European Parliament not to be party to this spiralling crisis, and to act in a responsible, de-escalatory manner in order to not worsen the relations between the EU and Russia. The people of Europe do not want a war with Russia.

Debate: Tuesday



Barbara Spinelli - Protection of investigative journalists

Ensuring a safe and secure environment for journalists and their sources must represent a priority for the EU institutions and the member states. At the same time, the transnational dimension of the criminal activities of mafia-type organisations is still an underestimated phenomenon at an EU level. The Commission's decision to not publish the EU Anti-Corruption Report in 2017 is, in this regard, deeply regrettable.

Vote: Thursday



Dimitrios Papadimoulis - March's EU Council conclusions

The European Union must step up in order to meet the concerns and the needs of European citizens. The results so far on jobs and growth aren't enough and we need immediate and concrete actions. We must have a stable Social Pillar for working rights and sustainable development, and a European Union that will correct its path rather than go down the same old problematic route of neoliberalism. Also, an agenda that tackles inequalities, unemployment, bad quality working conditions and unequal investments should form the basis of the discussions between the EU with the Western Balkans. Peace, stability and sustainable development are what the Western Balkans need and we must all take the initiatives on that.

Debate: Wednesday



Kateřina Konečná - Circular Economy

We welcome this agreement as the waste package will lead to more recycling and contribute to the creation of a circular economy. The new rules will establish legally binding targets for waste recycling and fixed deadlines for the reduction of landfills. It will also boost growth and jobs, protect our environment, encourage sustainability and improve people's health and well-being. It could've been more ambitious but we're happy that the negotiations had been concluded without delays. That is why we will support this package.

Debate: Monday; vote: Wednesday



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Dennis De Jong - Martin Selmayr appointment

Martin Selmayr's appointment as the Commission's Secretary-General has caused much upheaval in the European Parliament, in the media, and with the public at large. The Commission rushed through his appointment and questions must be asked whether this was in the interest of the civil service. The sheer arrogance of Juncker, Timmermans and Oettinger and their mishandling of the Selmayr affair means that they should publicly apologise for this mess.



Cornelia Ernst - Facebook/Cambridge Analytica

For years, Facebook has allowed dubious companies like Cambridge Analytica access to personal information of at least 80 million of its users. Even though its CEO Mark Zuckerberg is now publicly making amends, his testimony cannot be trusted: Facebook did not give away its data out of neglect or ignorance. They did it because it allowed Facebook to know more about their users, and to make even more profit. It is part of their business model, and that has to change.

Debate: Wednesday



Stefan Eck - Organic production and labelling of organic products

After a long and rocky road, we finally reached consensus. Although the outcome has some positive improvements, it still lacks progressive elements. For example, it falls short on limiting thresholds for pesticide residues. Similarly, obligations for industrial farming in order to reduce the pressure on organic farmers don't go far enough, nor does the ongoing orientation towards exports and big production and the welfare of farm animals. The European Parliament did its homework but after 18 trilogues, the Council got its way and watered down the ambitious proposals.

Debate: Wednesday



Patrick Le Hyaric - Employment policy guidelines

The Employment Committee guidelines are supposed to bring a social dimension to the European semester in the fight against growing inequalities. Despite the many positive elements we managed to achieve at the Committee, budgets and balance sheets ultimately won the day and austerity will prevail. The guidelines are thus incoherent and are nothing more than window dressing, telling the Council and the Commission that they should listen to the Parliament but without saying very much at all.

Debate: Wednesday Vote: Thursday

GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 17/04/2018 @ 11.30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Gabi Zimmer – President, GUE/NGL - Syria

Neoklis Sylikiotis – Situation in Gaza and Facebook/Cambridge Analytics

Press Conference Wednesday 10.30

Miguel Urbán Crespo - Tax evasion

Press Conference Wednesday 11.00

Marie-Christine Vergiat - Death in the Mediterranean Sea

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